



Neighborhood Watch Monthly Newsletter

June 2008

It's your community – Get involved!

Over the past several months the Sandy City Police Department has been notified of many circumstances in which mail has been taken from mailboxes and scattered throughout neighborhoods. We are very concerned about this type of behavior and want the public to be aware and vigilant.

Many people are under the impression that this type of crime doesn't occur in Utah, let alone Sandy City. Unfortunately, this impression is false. Mail theft can happen to anyone. We've seen mail theft victims who are police officers, attorneys, judges, teachers -- nearly every occupation and in every neighborhood imaginable.

The U.S. Postal Service handles 668 million pieces of mail every day. The vast majority of it arrives intact, but thieves get to some of it before delivery. Theft of mail is a crime reaching epidemic proportions in our state as well as throughout the nation. Mail thieves are after the personal financial information of victims, including personal checks, credit cards, credit card numbers, credit applications, bank statements and valid identification that can be falsified. For the criminal, the mailbox is a gateway to financial fraud, limited only by imagination. Victims are left with emptied bank accounts and shattered credit ratings.

In Sandy City, partly due to the location of our boxes, one prime target for mail thieves is the residential curbside mailbox. Thieves steal outgoing mail, particularly personal checks made out to pay bills. Apartment and condominium complexes are also easy targets for thieves, who make counterfeit mail box keys and steal large volumes of mail at one time.

To criminals, stolen mail has the potential to be extremely valuable. Stolen checks are chemically "washed" of their ink, so the thief can make out a new amount and a new payee. Furthermore, computer software is widely available to allow the creation of dozens of professional-looking checks with the victim's bank account number reproduced at the bottom. Before the victim even knows that the check they put in the mail was intercepted, their account can be emptied. Mailboxes also hold important financial data, such as credit card numbers, social security numbers, birth dates, addresses, and bank statements. This information can be used to make purchases over the telephone or Internet, apply for new lines of credit under a false name, and make withdrawals from the bank. The potential value of personal financial data sitting in a mailbox has made the crime too lucrative for criminals to resist.

In order to protect you from becoming a victim of mail theft, the U.S. Postal Service suggests following these simple prevention techniques:

- *Never send cash or coins in the mail. Use checks or money orders.
- *Promptly remove mail from your mailbox after delivery, especially if you're expecting checks, credit cards, food coupons or other negotiable items. If you won't be home when the items are expected, ask a trusted neighbor or friend to pick up your mail.
- *Have your local post office hold your mail while you're on vacation, or absent from your home for a long period of time.
- *If you don't receive a check, food coupon or other valuable mail you're expecting, contact the issuing agency immediately.
- *If you change your address, immediately notify your post office and anyone with whom you do business via the mail.
- *Always deposit your mail in a Postal Service mail collection box or mail slot at your local post office, or hand it to your letter carrier. Don't place it for carrier pick-up on a mailbox or area where it can be easily stolen.
- *Ask your bank for "secure" checks that can't be altered, and consider having the checks delivered to your bank branch where you can pick them up.
- *Install a locking mailbox.

Unfortunately, nobody's immune from mail theft. It's up to you to do all that you can to prevent mail theft from occurring. If you ever see a person acting suspicious around mailboxes or you actually see them stealing mail, be a good witness. Get the best description of the person(s) as you can. Get descriptions of any vehicle being used, including the license plate number and state, the make, model and color. Call 9-1-1 right away. Police Officers in the area will respond and will try to find and apprehend the suspect(s). Furthermore, contact the U.S. Postal service and ask for the nearest Postal Inspector in your area. They will work with you and the Police Department in investigating the mail theft. They get high ratings for their work, in the last year alone arresting over 5,000 theft suspects.

Amy Bryant

May 2008

Sandy City Offenses	Flat Iron	Canyon	Dimple Dell	Bluff	Auto Mall	South Towne	Jordan	Historic	Total
Aggravated Assault	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	3	5
Alcohol Offenses	0	2	0	0	5	4	13	10	34
Animal Problems	5	2	0	0	6	0	0	2	15
Arson	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Burglary	15	4	1	2	7	1	9	18	57
Death Calls	0	1	2	0	2	0	2	1	8
Disorderly	3	0	0	1	3	2	4	8	21
Domestics	10	7	2	3	10	9	15	35	91
Drug Offenses	3	6	0	1	18	8	33	41	110
Forgeries & Frauds	3	1	0	0	4	5	5	10	28
Homicides	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Juvenile Problems	10	4	2	0	19	3	25	18	81
Kidnappings	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Property Offenses	22	17	11	5	42	8	19	20	144
Protective Orders	0	1	1	0	1	1	1	0	5
Robbery	0	0	0	0	2	0	1	1	4
Sex offenses	5	1	0	0	3	0	10	5	24
Simple Assault	7	7	3	1	9	6	15	27	75
Suspicious Calls	2	3	4	0	2	1	8	4	24
Theft	11	6	4	0	59	40	33	48	201
Threats	4	0	1	1	10	6	6	7	35
Traffic Crashes	12	15	6	6	25	26	54	40	184
Trespassing	1	2	1	0	5	1	4	7	21
Vehicle Burglary	3	17	5	6	6	11	21	21	90
Vehicle Theft	2	1	0	0	2	1	2	9	17
Warrant Service	2	3	0	0	6	3	15	16	45
Weapons Offense	2	0	0	0	1	0	1	3	7
Total	123	102	43	26	247	136	296	354	1327

Flat Iron- 1300 E to the East border, North border to 9400 S; Canyon- 1300 E to the East border, 9400 S to the Gully; Dimple Dell- 1300 E to the East border, 10350 S to 11400 S; Bluff- 1300 E to the East border, 11400 S to South border; South Towne- West border to 1300 E, Gully to 10600 S; Auto Mall- West border to 1300 E, 10600 S to South border; Historic- West border to 1300 E, North border to 9000 S; Jordan- West border to 1300 E, 9000 S to the Gully

Are you interested in the field of Criminal Justice? Have you ever been interested in working with Victims of Crime? Sandy City currently has open positions in their Volunteer Victim Advocate Program. Volunteering with this program will give you an opportunity to give back to the community and serve those who are less fortunate! The positions available are for four shifts per month during the evening and weekend hours. If you are interested please contact Laci Warby at (801) 568-7283.

Attention Area Leaders
Please Join Us For
National Night Out Against Crime

National Night Out Against Crime is celebrated world wide to heighten crime prevention awareness and strengthen Neighborhood Watch. Traditionally, National Night Out Against Crime is celebrated by everyone turning on outdoor lights and taking flashlight walks through the neighborhood. Additionally, many neighborhoods organize Area parties and neighborhood cookouts to celebrate the evening. National Night Out Against Crime is designed to: (1) Heighten crime and drug prevention awareness; (2) generate support for, and participation in, local anticrime programs; (3) strengthen neighborhood spirit and police-community partnerships; and (4) send a message to criminals letting them know that neighborhoods are organized and fighting back.

This year, National Night Out Against Crime will be held on **Tuesday, August 5th**. National Night Out Against Crime is a great opportunity for you to organize a Neighborhood Watch Area Party. If you do organize a party, plan it between the hours of 6:30 P.M.-8:30 P.M. and the Sandy City Police Department along with city officials will be out that night to attend. All you need to do to get us there is let us know where your party is being held. **Contact Amy Bryant at 568-7200** and give a contact name, location of event and estimated number of people you are expecting. (Children should be included in National Night Out Against Crime Events.) Once we have this information, we will put you on our list of places to visit that evening. We will arrive anytime between the hours of 6:30 P.M. and 8:30 P.M. with crime and drug prevention information, kid's badges, pencils, coloring books and much more! Also, we will provide an ice cream dessert for all! This is the easiest and cheapest event of the year. Plus, it fulfills your obligation to host one meeting or event (per year) in your neighborhood. Please join us!



Due to the large amounts of Neighborhood Watch Area's in Sandy City, if you are planning on participating in this event, we need to have an **RSVP by Monday, July 21st** to plan accordingly. Once reservations have been made, more details will follow.

Let's make criminals aware we are watching and make this year's National Night Out Against Crime a success!